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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#)
SUBJECT: USAU: AFRICAN UNION APPOINTS SPECIAL
REPRESENTATIVE FOR SOMALIA

Classified By: Ambassador Cindy L. Courville for reasons 1.4 (B) & (D)

[11](#). (U) This cable is from US Mission to the African Union
(USAU) Ambassador Dr. Cindy L. Courville.

[12](#). (U) SUMMARY: On November 28 the newly appointed African
Union Special Representative for Somalia called on Ambassador
Courville to introduce himself and to inform her of his
vision for his mission. He expects to be proactive and to
reside in Mogadishu. END SUMMARY.

[13](#). (U) PARTICIPANTS: AU Special Representative Nicolas
Bwakira and Ambassador Courville

[14](#). (C) Nicolas Bwakira views his role as a facilitator and
coordinator among African and other international partners,
and expects to be active in policy formulation. He will
travel to Kampala, Kenya, and Djibouti to discuss the
situation in Somalia with government officials and partners.
He had immediate plans for trips. He will travel with a
small team to Baidoa with the express purpose of influencing
the decision making process before a new cabinet is formed.
He observed that the Somali president is trying to open up
government by bringing opposition and civil society into the
cabinet. Among his other comments, Bwakira stated that there
are members of the Diaspora who infer that Somalia's current
government has sold out to the Ethiopians.

[16](#). (C) Bwakira articulated that he wants to understand how
the US defines its Somalia policy and how the US assesses the
political and military realities. He commented that
Burundian troops were ready to deploy, but standing up AMISOM
"has a long way to go" and needs a common approach that
supported AU leadership. He also expressed the hope the UN
would join the AU in Somalia. Bwakira asked if the proposed
meeting of the International Contact Group (ICG) High-Level
for December 12-13 was still pending. The Ambassador
informed that A/S Frazer could not participate on the
proposed dates and the US and the AU were looking at
alternative dates.

[17](#). (U) BIOGRAPHIC NOTE: Nicolas Bwakira, the newly
appointed African Union Special Representative for Somalia is
Burundian by birth, but holds South African citizenship. He
received his Master's in International Law from the
University of Paris and has thirty two years of UN
Peacekeeping Operations experience in Africa. Bwakira worked
for the UN High Commission for Refugees. He is also a South
African diplomat who worked in the South African
International Relations Directorate. Nicolas characterizes
himself as a non-traditional diplomat who says what he thinks
and reports what he sees on the ground

18. (C) AU SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE PROPOSED WAY FORWARD:
-- Develop an AU comprehensive political and peacekeeping
approach to Somalia
-- Travel to Baidoa, Kampala, Kenya, Djibouti and Mogadishu
-- Cultivate a comprehensive international and regional
approach to Somalia
-- Participate in the upcoming meeting of the international
Somalia Contact Group
-- Establish office in Mogadishu
YAMAMOTO